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REPORT

OF THE

STATE COMMISSIONERS

OF

IMMIGRATION.

NINTH REGULAR SESSION—1876.

SALEM, OREGON:
MART. V. BROWN, STATE PRINTER.
1876.

REPORT.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Oregon:

Your Board, created by an Act of the Legislature, approved October 28, 1874, to attend to the immigration interests of this State, was duly commissioned by the Governor in November, 1874, but was not organized till January, 1875.

The Legislature having failed to make an appropriation to carry into effect the objects of this Board, contributions had to be solicited from the citizens of Portland, by whose aid alone, together with valuable assistance from the Land Department of the Oregon and California Railroad Company, has the Board been sustained, and done the State and immigrants, who have since arrived, valuable service.

A Secretary, without salary, and an Assistant Secretary, with salary, were appointed in February, 1875, who have since continued in office and given the Board their services, being in daily attendance on immigrants. A special agent was appointed for distribution of circulars and pamphlets on the Union Pacific Railroad, and a salaried agent was sent from Oregon to San Francisco, with an office provided for him there, in order to give immigrants arriving in that city from the East and from California all information as to Oregon, whose duty it is

also to see that such immigrants are sent to this State. These agents have done good service; and the Board is much indebted to the Oregon Steamship Company and the Oregon Steam Navigation Company for the contributions which they have made for paying the San Francisco agent's salary and office rent.

On the recommendation and request of your Board, the Governor has issued (under the Immigration Act, approved October 24, 1874) twenty-four special commissions to gentlemen carefully selected by us, as Oregon Immigration Commissioners in sister States and foreign countries, of which ten are residing in Europe, ten in the United States, two in New Zealand and two in Canada. These gentlemen are in regular communication with the Board, and have forwarded numbers of immigrants into Oregon.

The Board has also at Astoria a paid distributor of cards or circulars from this Board, whose duty consists in delivering, on the arrival of each San Francisco steamer at Astoria, cards to immigrants on board, stating the objects of your Commission, and earnestly pressing such immigrants, on their arrival at Portland, to call at the immigration rooms there, and receive all necessary information and guidance to enable them to settle in the various portions of the State. The Board of Trade of Portland for upward of a year tendered their rooms for the use of immigrants, rent free, and thereafter the Secretary (Mr. Reid) has, during the last six months, also tendered to the Immigration Board, rent free, a reception room for the use of immigrants and Assistant Secretary.

A record has been kept of the number of letters received by the Board in relation to immigration, which was 5,616 for the eighteen months preceding September

9, 1876, principally from persons in the Eastern States and from Oregon's Commissioners of Immigration abroad, the majority of which letters had to be separately answered in writing, as they contained various pointed questions asked in relation to this State. This Board has printed nine different circulars relating to Oregon's resources, climate, and lands for sale, in all, 147,500 copies printed, of which there have been distributed in the East and in California, abroad, in Canada, New Zealand and elsewhere, and to intending immigrants 83,000 copies, in addition to which the Board received from Henry Villard, Esq., President of the O. & C. R. R. Co., a donation of 15,000 pamphlets, with maps of Western Oregon. The Eastern branch of the State Board of Immigration at Boston inform us that they have, at their own expense, distributed in the Eastern States 50,000 copies of pamphlets and 25,000 circulars; have received over 8,000 letters from persons, as to Oregon, the most of which they have answered in writing; that they advertised the resources of Oregon continually for two years in forty-five different newspapers in New England and Western States and European countries. For the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, the Eastern branch also printed, at their own cost, a special edition of pamphlets, 20,000 copies of which were sent to the Oregon Department of the Centennial for distribution. In short, they inform this Board that their united expenditure for immigration purposes during the last two years has been over $24,000.

Keeping these facts in view, your honorable body will see that the assistance derived by this Board and the State from the labors of the Boston branch of the Oregon Immigration Board and the Land Department of the

Oregon and California Railroad combined, has been invaluable.

The circulars delivered on board the steamers at Astoria, requesting immigrants to call at the immigration rooms, have had the desired effect; consequently immigrants come *daily* to the rooms, where they are received by the Assistant Secretary and Secretary, and frequently by the Commissioners. All information is afforded them, and their various wants, so far as in the Board's power to supply, are attended to. Those who arrive in search of labor, receive whatever employment is open in the Board's labor record book. Direct orders for help are received, and those not so provided are directed to such localities as offer best inducements, and furnished with letters to enable them to secure employment. This Labor Record is of much importance to the Board, as it gives the immigrant courage, relieves distress, and prevents useless waste of his means while in search of employment. If taken more advantage of by the citizens of the State, much more good would follow to the immigrant and those employers of labor, farmers and such like. Immigrants in search of lands are handed lists of private lands for sale (which lists contain answers to the Board's advertisements in most of the Oregon newspapers for descriptions of lands for sale, for use of immigrants.) The Board does not undertake the sale of such lands, however, leaving the owner and purchaser to complete whatever bargains they may mutually agree upon, and the immigrant to choose which of the farms he prefers. All information is given of State and Government lands, and where located, all over the State.

If, as frequently happens, complaints are made by immigrants of being imposed on by sharpers, these complaints are investigated, and the proper authorities commu-

nicated with. Occasionally the Board has had in court to watch the interests of immigrants of whom an advantage was being taken by unprincipled persons.

The Board sometime ago concluded contracts with one of the Atlantic steamship companies to carry emigrants to Oregon from Europe to New York *at half the usual rates.* This contract has been largely taken advantage of, and will not expire till the 5th of May, 1879. Arrangements were made, and still in force, by which the Oregon Steamship Company carry all persons, certified by the Oregon Commissioners or one of the Foreign Commissioners of Emigration as *bona fide* emigrants to Portland, at modified rates of fare in the steerage, while the California Railroad Company agreed to carry all immigrants when they first arrive in Portland to their destination "up country" at half fares, at which rates, in 1875, they carried 3,900 persons, and in 1876, to the 7th of September, 2,100 persons. These benefits are largely taken advantage of, and persons lately from the East and Europe frequently, in consequence, receive from the Board such certificates to bring their friends here.

Circulars were forwarded by one of the Multnomah county Granges to every Grange in Oregon, asking answers as to the advantages, resources, products and prices in every locality, from which answers your Board selected one in every county and printed for each county the information so given by such county Grange. 50,000 circulars of this nature were printed for circulation.

It is the Board's experience that a careful distribution of samples of Oregon's products is of vast service in inducing immigration to our shores. Consequently a large assortment of samples is kept in the Board's rooms at Portland and forwarded by us to each of the States' foreign

commissioners and to certain parties seeking such information as to our products. To various museums in Europe, to a few States and to New Zealand, have been forwarded assorted samples of Oregon grains, which, we are informed, are permanently kept on exhibition, the fruits of which are seen from the letters of persons who have observed these samples writing to us for further information.

It is difficult to procure an accurate statement of the arrivals in and departures from our State, so as to ascertain definitely our increase of population. But judging from the most reliable data we have obtained, we believe that during the last twenty months 11,213 immigrants have arrived in this State. The large majority of immigrants come from the Western and Northwestern States, a good number from Europe and New England States, and from New Zealand; from which latter colony your Board procured the names of 5,000 persons, principally sheep and agricultural farmers, to whom were mailed 5,000 copies of a printed circular, describing Eastern Oregon as a sheep country, and Western Oregon as a grain growing section. Already many immigrants have arrived from New Zealand, and judging from the letters we receive and the opinions expressed by our Immigration Commissioners in that colony, a larger number will follow next year.

Without the generous assistance in money, contributed by the people of Portland, the Board feels satisfied that its labors could not have been successfully conducted, and while the Board cheerfully offers to continue its services to the State, as heretofore, without compensation, yet it respectfully begs to represent to your honorable body that its funds are now exhausted, and the people of Portland feel that they ought not, in future, to alone bear the necessary expense which is annually entailed in sustaining your

State Board of Immigration. If the State's resources are to be developed and its immigrants guided and protected after their arrival here—which we submit is the State's duty so to do—Portland will, in taxation, naturally bear her share, it being about one-fourth of whatever sum the State should appropriate for immigration purposes; and as the benefits derived from an increase of our agricultural population, which we so much need, are not limited to Portland, but scattered among all classes of the State, especially in the enhanced value of farm lands, your Board respectfully ask your honorable body to appropriate at least $4,000 per year for two years for immigration purposes. As every section of Oregon is directly benefitted and shares in the fruits of immigration, so much needed for our State, it is but right that all should share in whatever expense is incurred.

Your honorable body is aware, we presume, that State Immigration Boards exist in Minnesota, Kansas and Missouri, and most other Western States, and in all the British colonies. That the State of Minnesota and Kansas have, through their Immigration Board, increased their populations from 107,110 persons in 1860, to 364,399 in 1870, and Minnesota from 172,022 in 1860 to 439,706 in 1870; also, that the Department of State report at Washington, D. C., showed on 30th of March, 1870, that 345,653 immigrants had arrived, two-thirds of whom had gone to the Western States. The Commissioner of Immigration at Castle Garden, New York, estimates the worth to a State in labor, and the money which each immigrant brings with him at $1,275 in value. Taking it for granted even that the 11,213 persons who arrived within this State during the last two years only contributed $500 each, instead of $1,275,

toward the development of the State resources, the State will, *in taxation alone*, derive from the settlement of these persons at least $10,000. Consequently, your Board respectfully submits that whatever State appropriation is voted for immigration purposes will be returned to the State twofold in taxes alone; so that, practically, the immigrants themselves, after their arrival in Oregon, will repay to the State considerably more in taxes than the appropriation voted for bringing them hither. It is unnecessary for us to remark that beyond the pecuniary benefits so derived in taxes by the State, our various industries, and especially agriculture, will, by a continued flow of immigration, instead of lying dormant, be sustained, and thus increase our trade and commerce, and benefits be felt by all classes.

Your Board would humbly represent that, in their opinion, next to railroad connection with the East, this matter of immigration is of vital importance to the State, and ought to receive what your Board respectfully asks—the careful consideration of your honorable body.

W. S. LADD,
H. W. CORBETT,
B. GOLDSMITH,
A. LIENENWEBER,
WILLIAM REID,
State Commissioners of Immigration.

PORTLAND, September 2, 1876.